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SUBJECT: ANTOINE GIZENGA NAMED PRIME MINISTER

REF: A. KINSHASA 1928  
[1](#)B. KINSHASA 1939

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: President Kabila named Antoine Gizenga as Prime Minister of the Third Republic on December 30. Gizenga's nomination was expected since his Unified Party of Lumumbists (PALU) entered into a coalition with Kabila's Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP) in October before the second round of national elections. The Prime Minister's first official function will be convening the National Assembly on January 6. Gizenga will then form the new Cabinet, a process that has informally been underway for several weeks. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Antoine Gizenga, leader of the Unified Party of Lumumbists (PALU) and Patrice Lumumba's former Vice Prime Minister in 1960, was formally named Prime Minister of the DRC's Third Republic on December 30. Gizenga's appointment was expected since he aligned his PALU party behind President Kabila in the October 2006 presidential election runoff.

[1](#)3. (U) Gizenga will convene the National Assembly on January 6, whereupon it will install its new Permanent Bureau (ref B). His most important challenge during his first weeks as Prime Minister will be to form the new government. A Cabinet of more than fifty ministers and vice ministers will be named, and the new Cabinet will be installed after the Prime Minister's nominations are approved by the National Assembly.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Gizenga and his staff will occupy offices at the Primature used during the Transition by Vice President Bemba and his staff. Gizenga's staff went to the offices on January 2, and Gizenga himself briefly visited on January 3. They reportedly found some offices without furniture, computers, electricity and/or water. Currently, the Prime Minister is working from his home, although temporary space may be requested if the renovation work on the Primature offices proves lengthy. PALU officials have already told the press that delays in occupying his formal offices may delay announcement of the new Cabinet past the January 10 date they had previously floated as a target.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Bio notes: Antoine Gizenga Fundji was born in 1925 in Bandundu province. Gizenga dedicated himself to the anti-colonial struggle beginning in 1959, and formed the Party of African Solidarity with Cleophas Kamitatu. Gizenga became Vice Prime Minister under Patrice Lumumba in 1960. After Lumumba was arrested, Gizenga organized resistance in Kisangani while awaiting Lumumba's return, fleeing that city in 1964. Although freed from house arrest by Mobutu in 1965, Gizenga went into exile in the USSR, Angola, and Europe and did not return to his country until 1990. Gizenga participated in the National Sovereign Conference in 1991 and

is a signatory to the 2002 Sun City Global and All Inclusive Agreement. He finished third in the DRC's first-round presidential election with 13 percent of the vote, and his PALU party won 34 seats in the post-transition National Assembly elections, in July 2006. He formed a coalition with the Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP) when he announced PALU's support for Joseph Kabila for the Presidency in October 2006, which brought Kabila significant support in both Bandundu and Kinshasa. Although highly disciplined and capable, the 81-year-old Gizenga keeps to a strict but relatively short daily schedule and some observers question whether he has the physical stamina to manage the hectic schedule required of a Prime Minister. More comprehensive biobdata on Gizenga will follow septel.

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